MINUTES

MONTANA SENATE 57th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Call to Order: By CHAIRMAN BOB KEENAN, on March 28, 2001 at 8:00 A.M., in Room 317 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Sen. Bob Keenan, Chairman (R)

Sen. Ken Miller, Vice Chairman (R)

Sen. Tom A. Beck (R)

Sen. Chris Christiaens (D)

Sen. John Cobb (R)

Sen. William Crismore (R)

Sen. Greg Jergeson (D)

Sen. Royal Johnson (R)

Sen. Bea McCarthy (D)

Sen. Arnie Mohl (R)

Sen. Linda Nelson (D)

Sen. Debbie Shea (D)

Sen. Corey Stapleton (R)

Sen. Bill Tash (R)

Sen. Jon Tester (D)

Sen. Mignon Waterman (D)

Sen. Jack Wells (R)

Sen. Tom Zook (R)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Prudence Gildroy, Committee Secretary

Jon Moe, Legislative Fiscal Division

Please Note: These are summary minutes. Testimony and

discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

Committee Business Summary:

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: HB 12, 3/25/2001; HB 3,

3/25/2001; HB 4, 3/25/2001; HB

9, 3/25/2001

Executive Action: HB 12; HB 9

HEARING ON HB 12

Sponsor: REP. DICK HAINES, HD 63, MISSOULA

Proponents: Lou Moore, Bureau Chief, Pollution Prevention,

Department of Environmental Quality

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. DICK HAINES, HD 63, MISSOULA, advised the bill would retrofit existing buildings to hold down energy costs. He said the state would pay for the program by bond proceeds. The bill would have three appropriations.

Proponents' Testimony:

Lou Moore, Bureau Chief Pollution Prevention, Department of Environmental Quality, offered an overview of the bill and the need for the legislation. She explained how this bill would reduce operating costs within state buildings, and increase energy efficiency and savings for the state. At the end of each fiscal year, any savings in excess of the debt service and the program cost are swept to the long range building program. projects are engineered so that they save more money than they cost, even in the short term when the bonds are being repaid. She stated the department had completing 45 projects and have another 45 projects in progress. Since the program began gross savings have been about \$900,000 per year. The cumulative sweep to the long range building program was about \$960,000. She reviewed the sections of the bill dealing with implementing procedural changes for the program. She felt the work was more important than ever, given the current energy crisis. She stated the bill would require a vote of 2/3 of the members of each House.

Opponents' Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

SEN. ROYAL JOHNSON thought the program has merit. He asked if this program covered the university system. Lou Moore said yes, it does cover the university system. SEN. JOHNSON asked if the program would access general obligation bonds. Lou Moore answered yes, it would. SEN. JOHNSON asked if the revenue to pay those bonds off was assessed against the university system to be paid off. Lou Moore answered, that was correct. SEN. JOHNSON was concerned about the current buildings in need. He asked if

those particular areas of need have to put that in their budgets. Lou Moore answered yes. When there was a project, they had to identify what the utility costs would be and DEQ helped to determine the savings and then it was dealt with in the budget. SEN. JOHNSON asked if the stripper wells were currently in the program. Lou Moore explained the appropriation of \$550,000 of stripper well monies to assist in setting the program up. She said the \$100,000 being asked for in the bill was the remaining funds from the original \$550,000. They are asking to reappropriate. The funds will be used of the early analysis and engineering work. SEN. JOHNSON asked where they would get the money if the \$100,000 of stripper well money was gone. Lou Moore explained that would be the bond proceeds of \$450,000 in the bill and those bond proceeds are used for energy analysis. The intention was to continue to use those bond proceeds in the SEN. JOHNSON asked if during each biennium they would have to ask for a new bonding program. Lou Moore said this was being taken out of the \$3.6 million proceeds. SEN. JOHNSON asked how they would allocate that cost to each project. Georgia Brensdal, Program Manager, Department of Environmental Quality, said the appropriation of \$450,000 was budgeted out by the needs of the program. About 1/3 of that was administration costs and costs of issuance on the bond. The other 2/3 was for technical preparation. It was done on a project by project basis, based on the needs of each building that they looked at.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. DICK HAINES apologized to **SEN. JOHNSON** and said there was no attempt to minimize use of taxpayer dollars. He thought there was a chance to save taxpayer dollars in the long run.

HEARING ON HB 3

Sponsor: REP. STAN FISHER, HD 75, BIGFORK

<u>Proponents</u>: Jane Hammond, Office of Budget & Program Planning

Kurt Alme, Director, Department of Revenue

Dan Anderson, Administrator Mental and Addictive

Disorders Division, DPHHS

Connie Walsh, OBPP

Don Hartley, Administrator Forestry Division, DNRC

Larry Fasbender, Deputy Director, Dept. of Justice

Kathy Fabiano, Office of Public Instruction Sharon Cate, Centralized Services, Montana

Historical Society

Bill Slaughter, Department of Corrections

Rod Sunsted, Associate Commissioner, Fiscal Affairs, MT. University System

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. STAN FISHER, HD 75, BIGFORK, said HB 3 would allocate additional funds to various departments of the state for cost overruns. He handed out a summary of requested supplemental appropriations EXHIBIT (fcs70a01). He presented an explanation of the supplemental appropriations EXHIBIT (fcs70a02).

<u>Proponents' Testimony</u>:

Governor's Office

Jane Hammond, OBPP, encouraged support of the bill. She said representatives from the agencies were available for questions. She explained the governor's request was reduced due to less turnover in exempt staff than was originally anticipated with the new administration.

SEN. KEN MILLER commented the cost for a change of administration was amazing. He thought there was a certain amount of funds in the budget, but this was a supplemental. Ms. Hammond said \$50,000 was appropriated every four years to support transition team efforts. Other costs this time were due to the turnover of all of the elected officials. There was some amount for accrued vacation and sick leave. Those were not funded in the budget and would be an issue before the legislature in the next session. Currently, the agencies absorb the cost except a change of administration was handled by a supplemental. SEN. MILLER asked if the \$50,000 was just the governor's. Ms. Hammond said that was just the governor's but included the cost of the transition and the recruitment of the directors in all the executive branch SEN. MILLER asked if the other elected offices have similar budgets. Ms. Hammond explained the only transition costs of that sort were in the governor's office.

Department of Revenue

Kurt Alme, Director, Department of Revenue, gave a brief discussion of the supplemental request to cover shortfalls of revenues in the Customer Service Center. They had trouble with their POINTS system that reduced the amount of collections they were able to do for other agencies and he explained rates were

set too low two years ago. There was not as much agency participation as expected. The costs came in as expected but revenues were \$2.7 million low. He indicated the \$100,00 appropriation was for legal fees related to implementation of the Unisys POINTS II contract. The \$219,000 appropriation was for upgrading the old property tax system.

SEN. STAPLETON had seen the numbers in subcommittee and thought it had already been authorized. Mr. Alme explained the money was needed this biennium with continued appropriation into the next biennium. The subcommittee recommended it be included in the supplemental bill. SEN. STAPLETON asked if the subcommittee did not appropriate. Mr. Alme did not think that happened.

{Tape : 1; Side : B}

SEN. STAPLETON asked the question of **Greg Dewitt, Legislative Fiscal Division,** who replied the subcommittee voted to approve a recommendation to House Appropriations for the supplemental that was being requested.

SEN. WATERMAN asked about contracting with outside counsel regarding the UNISYS contract and whether outside counsel had been involved in the original contract. Mr. Alme believed they did not originally have outside counsel and that they had the same outside counsel that did the Warm Springs contract and they were still exploring the remedies. SEN. WATERMAN hoped the contracting process was being reviewed in order to strengthen that process.

SEN. JOHNSON asked about the compliance on the \$219,000 and whether Mr. Alme stated that the old system would be redone. Mr. Alme indicated they had a functioning property tax system they had used in the past. It was more manual and labor intensive than the new system was supposed to be, so the amount was to bring it up to speed to get through the reappraisal cycle. SEN. JOHNSON asked how much had been spent on the new system. Mr. Alme indicated \$2.1 million had been spent on the property tax stream and they were invoiced currently for another \$600,000. He said the new system would be a better system but was still in the development phase.

Department of Public Health and Human Services

Dan Anderson, Administrator, DPHHS, explained the largest part of the supplemental was in the mental health area. They had higher than anticipated caseloads in both the Medicaid part of the Mental Health program and the non-Medicaid Mental Health Services Benefit Program. Additionally, the population in the Montana State Hospital during the entire biennium was above what had been predicted. The construction project at the State Hospital was delayed about a year. The other area within the department with a significant supplemental was in the Medicaid Primary Care area and the Health Policies Division due to higher than anticipated hospitalization and the pharmacy benefit program.

SEN. COBB asked if there were changes in the numbers since subcommittee action. Mr. Anderson said one change was that the subcommittee had recommended an additional \$125,000 for some additional resources for the division for the current fiscal That was not put in by the House. SEN. COBB asked if it was voted down and what the procedure was. Mr. Anderson indicated the amendment was not offered in the Appropriations SEN. WATERMAN explained the subcommittee made Committee. recommendations but the House was actually in charge of the supplemental bill. SEN. COBB asked if the budget office did not want that anyway. Connie Walsh, OBPP, indicated the amount they provided to the subcommittee was what the administration requested. She said the amount presented to the subcommittee contained a supplemental request for \$16,254,248. SEN. COBB asked if they would still be short. Ms. Walsh believed it was an appropriate amount. SEN. COBB asked if they thought they would go over it if things don't change. He asked if it didn't cover the costs how they would pay for them. Chuck Swysgood, Director, OBPP, contended services would be reduced. SEN. COBB thought Human Services was always hard to project and asked if they would still be short and how it would be decided to start cutting. Mr. Swysgood said they would review the budget and track expenditures. He said the costs appropriated were sufficient currently.

SEN. WATERMAN asked about the status of the Warm Springs lawsuit and counter-lawsuit and the chance of recovering any funds from the contractor. **Mr. Anderson** indicated the status was unknown.

SEN. JOHNSON recalled the Warm Springs State Hospital project being controversial and asked Dan Anderson if the original estimates were \$16 million. Mr. Anderson believed the project was approved at \$21 million. SEN. JOHNSON contended that it was \$16 million when first presented in Billings. Mr. Anderson did not recall, but thought that may have been prior to the long range building request. The amount presented to the Legislature was not increased. SEN. JOHNSON asked if \$26 million had been spent on the project. Mr. Anderson did not know the answer but stated that once the project was approved, they have not asked

for or spent additional money. He said he would get the information for **SEN. JOHNSON**.

SEN. COBB asked about a request for contracting services to save costs. Mr. Anderson said they discussed with the subcommittee adding to the contract with First Health, their utilization contractor, to have two people in the communities to try to avoid state hospital admissions. A third person at the state hospital would help facilitate discharges back to communities. They thought with those resources, they could reduce utilization of the state hospital.

SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked Dan Anderson about the current population and how it compared with what they were budgeted for. Mr. Anderson replied it was 165 which was the population they are budgeted for in the coming biennium. Prior to subcommittee hearings, it was 190. He recognized the need for community alternatives. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked if they had the plan in place that would allow them, either through admissions or discharges, to keep near the 165 mark. Mr. Anderson thought additional work was needed. He said there were some funds in the budget to develop some new community alternatives. If the population goes above 165, those funds are available for the state hospital. **SEN. CHRISTIAENS** recalled there was \$2 million funded in the last biennium to move forward with community alternatives. He assumed the \$2 million got absorbed in the state hospital. Mr. Anderson said it was clear they spent more money than anticipated. SEN. CHRISTIAENS further questioned whether there was money to step up community services. **Anderson** stated there was \$1 million appropriated for the state hospital for the first year of the biennium as a contingency amount in case the population was not reduced as predicted. They spent that and more at the state hospital. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked how much was available in their current budget towards community services. Mr. Anderson advised a significant portion of the Medicaid appropriation for mental health was going for adult services and the same was true of the mental health services plan. Additionally, there was a \$2.4 million earmarked appropriation for the biennium either for additional alternatives or for the hospital itself if necessary. SEN. CHRISTIAENS hoped there was a plan. Mr. Anderson assured him there was.

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Don Hartley, Administrator Forestry Division, DNRC, presented a fire supplemental request to the committee EXHIBIT (fcs70a03). He spoke about the unprecedented fire season of 2000 and the unprecedented costs. He explained they were not budgeted for

fire suppression costs. The legislature chose to fund those requests with a supplemental. He explained the supplemental worksheet. The total supplemental was \$6,048,986 in HB 17 and \$27,175,588 in HB 3.

SEN. COBB inquired about how the reimbursements show up in the next budget. Jane Hammond, OBPP, said it was included in the balance sheet in the Martz budget. {Tape : 2; Side : A}

Department of Justice

Larry Fasbender, Deputy Director, Dept. of Justice, explained the supplemental request for the Attorney General's Office was reduced due to fewer exempt staff being turned over than anticipated with the change in administration. The new supplemental request was due to increased costs in the Extradition and Transportation of Prisoners Program.

Office of Public Instruction

Kathy Fabiano, Office of Public Instruction, explained the three supplemental requests for the department. \$21,009 was needed was for a settlement agreement with the Malta School District. She explained the second request was for total costs that were underestimated for distribution to schools and the third request was for spending authority of \$1,517,800 for Timber Harvest/Technology.

Montanan Historical Society

Sharon Cate, Centralized Services, Montana Historical Society, talked about the first portion of their supplemental request or \$249,923 due to the acquisition of the Scriver collection, valued at \$15 million. She explained the Library/Archives request which was due to the change in all elected officials and was for cataloging, processing and storing records of those officials. The appropriations subcommittee reduced the Governor's budget recommendation from \$350,000 to \$20,000.

SEN. WATERMAN asked if the \$350,000 would have been used to catalog the recent additions from elected officials. **Ms. Cate** indicated they would have purchased shelving and would have begun to process and catalog those records. **SEN. WATERMAN** asked if they were currently warehousing the records and if they were unusable. **Ms. Cate** indicated that was correct.

SEN. MCCARTHY asked if they would come back in two year with a request for cataloging the information properly. **Ms. Cate** replied they continually request those funds.

Department of Corrections

Bill Slaughter, Department of Corrections, explained the \$4 million supplemental appropriation request for the department. Part of the request was to cover projected expenditures for the payment of holding inmates in contract prison beds in county jails, plus regional correctional facilities and the private prison. Part of the request was for personal services. He stated the department had completely revamped the probation and parole area of personal services.

SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked about the contract beds issue and the cost for those. He mentioned the contract with Missoula County. Williams, Administrative Services Division, Department of Corrections, replied that Missoula indicated a pod was available. He noted that at the time the male population increased and they made the decision to use those beds. In October the population went down until February. He explained the same rates were used as in the other regionals and that the rates and capacity were renegotiated every two years. He indicated the general lengths of prison contracts were 30 years. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked about status of the contracts. Mr. Williams said they have revamped each contract. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked if the regional facilities were guaranteed 50% of their capacity. Mr. Williams answered yes. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked if the Deer Lodge (MSP) population was being managed well rather than sending them out to contract beds. Mr. Williams answered yes and offered further explanation. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked, with the recent statistics showing Montana's primary down and the growth the slowest in the past 29 years, how those numbers were used in the projection for the next 2 years. Mr. Williams anticipated a conservative growth rate for males of 5 to 6 percent and females between 5 and 7 percent. said they had a population growth task force. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked if there was a plan in place to assure no supplemental in two years. Mr. Williams felt comfortable with the current plan.

SEN. WATERMAN asked if any inmates were in out of state contracted beds. Mr. Williams did not believe so.

SEN. COBB asked what the supplemental would look like without the cost savings measures that were implemented. **Mr. Williams** said there could be an additional \$500,000 to \$600,000.

SEN. COBB asked if the cost savings would save the \$500,000. Mr. Williams worked with the budget office and presented a worst case scenario and mitigation plans. SEN. COBB asked what the worst case scenario would be. Mr. Williams said it could have been \$2 million more depending upon male population growth. SEN. COBB asked if they were \$600,000 short currently. Mr. Williams answered no.

SEN. TOM ZOOK asked if the growth rate in crime was down due to repeat offenders being locked up. Mr. Williams said 45% of admissions to the state prison are revocations. SEN. ZOOK asked if historically recidicism rates have stayed the same. Mr. Williams said they have increased by three percent over the years. More probation and parole officers are able to monitor caseloads better.

SEN. ARNIE MOHL asked if they would foresee any additional cuts that could be made in spending. Mr. Slaughter explained that travel expenditures were examined and leased vehicles not being used were given back. He vowed to keep looking as he got more familiar with the department. Savings often occurred in areas where they have no control. The department was not proposing to add new beds and was using contract beds to increase savings.

SEN. MOHL asked about the negotiation with Shelby and if the costs were down there. Mr. Slaughter answered they had met with C.C.A. and presented a sliding scale. They tried to hold as many as possible in state owned beds.

SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked if the C.C.A. was selling off prisons in Montana. **Mr. Slaughter** answered they were not looking at selling the site in Shelby. He thought it was a well run facility and worried about situations beyond their control.

{Tape 2; Side B}

SEN. CHRISTIAENS felt concern about a contingency plan. Mr. Slaughter indicated they were working with the governor's office.

School for the Deaf and Blind

SEN. GREG JERGESON asked Jane Hamman about moving money from personal services to operate and why was it in a supplemental. Mr. Hamman explained the budget amendment bill increases authority. SEN. JERGESON asked how much was involved. Ms. Hamman said about \$57,500 for the increase in utilities.

SEN. WATERMAN didn't think they could move funds from personal services. She asked **Jane Hamman** if the legislature doesn't

appropriate additional funds for utility costs, were they tying the hands of agencies. She wondered if agencies would have to come back with supplementals. Ms. Hamman said the bill that was passed makes it legal for the boilerplate in HB 2 to contain language that restricts personal services. SEN. WATERMAN asked if with the current language, they would not be able to cover it and would have to ask for a supplemental. Jane Hamman answered yes, that was correct. SEN. WATERMAN felt that would be an exception for this committee to consider in HB 2 that personal services costs could be moved to utilities.

SEN. JERGESON wondered about the energy costs with the university system.

Rod Sunstad, Associate Commissioner for Fiscal Affairs, Montana University System, requested the committee to include a supplemental for costs overruns for utility areas. He presented an amendment EXHIBIT(fcs70a04). He also passed out information regarding commodity prices EXHIBIT(fcs70a05). He explained the amendment and commodity pricing. The university prices for natural gas doubled but the university received no cost of living increase. The Montana University System uses as much natural gas as the rest of state government combined. That included academic buildings only. He thought those unanticipated costs met what a supplemental was intended for. He described their efforts to meet the shortfalls with cuts.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. STAN FISHER, HD 75, BIGFORK, closed on his bill and encouraged support from the committee.

HEARING ON HB 4

Sponsor: REP. JOHN WITT, HD 89, CARTER

<u>Proponents</u>: None

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. JOHN WITT, HD 89, CARTER, explained the bill was a budget amendment bill. He presented budget amendments EXHIBIT (fcs70a06) and handed out additional amendments EXHIBIT (fcs70a07) EXHIBIT (fcs70a08).

Proponents' Testimony: None

Opponents' Testimony: None

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

SEN. ZOOK said there was no general fund within the bill. He said the bill would change day by day as money became available. Basically, the committee would give spending authority on the funds.

SEN. JERGESON said these amendments are reported during the interim to the legislative fiscal division and interviewed by the Legislative Finance Committee. He thought the two amendments could be discussed in executive action.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. JOHN WITT, HD 89, CARTER, commented there were state special revenues involved in the bill as well as federal. He thanked the committee for a brief hearing and encouraged support of the bill.

HEARING ON HB 9

Sponsor: REP. DAVE KASTEN, HD 99, BROCKWAY

Proponents: Ellen Crane, Vice Chairman, Montana Cultural &

Aesthetic Trusts

Opponents: None

Opening Statement by Sponsor:

REP. DAVE KASTEN, HD 99, BROCKWAY, said the bill dealt with the Cultural and Aesthetic Grant program. He explained the program was administered by the Montana Arts Council and was funded by investment earnings from the statutory trust which receives coal severance tax monies. He advised \$3.9 million was used to purchase Virginia and Nevada Cities. He stated there were programs that provided monies for the protection of art in the State Capitol as well as cultural and aesthetic programs. He said the grants were reviewed by an advisory committee made up of eight members of the Montana Arts Council and eight members of the Historical Society. Those recommendations go to the governor's office and the Long Range Planning Committee. The recommendation was to fund 73 projects and the total funds were \$916,130. EXHIBIT (fcs70a09)

Proponents' Testimony:

Ellen Crane, Vice Chairman Advisory Committee, Montana Cultural & Aesthetic Trusts, said the grants would serve the state. She explained every county would be involved.

Opponents' Testimony:

None.

Questions from Committee Members and Responses:

SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked about the change in the funding from the second year and if interest earning were less. REP. KASTEN answered yes, they were less. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked about deletions. REP. KASTEN said \$2,460,935 million was requested for grants, the Advisory Committee recommended \$934,000 and \$916,000 was funded. He said some programs were not recommended for funding. SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked why the program in number four was deleted. Carleen Layne, Montana Arts Council, said that Long Range Planning always makes changes to the citizen committee's recommendations. She stated those were the least changes she had seen since her involvement with the process. She thought the committee was very careful, and the changes were made where it was felt projects could find other resources and still be conducted. It was felt that since times were tight and every other department was taking cuts, that the program should take its fair share. She felt they were very fair in their considerations.

REP. ZOOK asked about VIAS Inc. page two, line 10. Ms. Layne explained VIAS did not stand for anything. She advised they had a website for the Lewis and Clark Corp of Discovery. The website was considered one of the prime in the country and was being looked at by the Smithsonian as being their premier Lewis and Clark website. A map of the state with the communities benefitting from the funding in HB 9 was handed out EXHIBIT (fcs70a10).

SEN. JACK WELLS was curious about the funds being cut and asked about the three items on the last page of the bill. **REP. KASTEN** said the state had already put money into those projects and one had gotten grants every year. The money was returned to the general fund. It was a 12 percent reduction.

SEN. JOHNSON asked about item number four on page two; he wondered if any money was left anyplace for Chief Plenty Coups State Park. **REP. KASTEN** replied the state support for that project was almost \$20,000.

SEN. CHRISTIAENS felt the money should have stayed in the account earning interest instead of going back to the general fund in light of what the agency gave up in the purchase of Virginia City.

SEN. WELLS wondered again about the three increases on the last page of the bill. REP. KASTEN said they were good projects. SEN. JOHN TESTER explained the extra \$5,000 budgeted for the depot in Livingston would help them attain their goal. He mentioned the Belt Public Library was in the middle of a police station and money was needed for a new location. The Liberty Village project funding was thought to be minimal and they had requested little or no money for labor.

Closing by Sponsor:

REP. DAVE KASTEN, HD 99, BROCKWAY, summarized the bill and stated there was no other state or federal assistance with the three items on the last page.

{Tape 3; Side A}

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 12

Motion/Vote: SEN. WATERMAN moved HB 12 TO BE CONCURRED IN. Motion
carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 9

<u>Motion/Vote</u>: SEN. JOHNSON moved HB 9 TO BE CONCURRED IN. Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 10:50 A.M.

	SEN.	BOB	KEENAN	, Chairman
	PRUDEN	CE G	LLDROY,	Secretary

EXHIBIT (fcs70aad)